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BRIAN C. BLAD
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Congressman Mike Simpson
2084 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Simpson:

On behalf of the City of Pocatello and the homeowners in our Johnny Creek neighborhood, I am requesting your support for funding for the first phase of transitioning over 200 homes from their failing septic systems to a new, modern sewer system.

The proposal to connect the Johnny Creek area to the Pocatello municipal sewer system is not new. Discussion about sewerage the area has been ongoing since at least 1967 when the area was first annexed into the city of Pocatello.

A significant number of homeowners in the Johnny Creek area have experienced failed septic systems. Due to standard system life expectancy issues combined with the difficulties of predicting failures, the community expects more failures on the horizon. Once a septic system fails, the cost to replace it is over \$20,000, assuming sufficient space is even available. At this point, the only viable option may be abandoning the septic system and connecting to a municipal sewer system. In some situations, the cost could be relatively affordable where infrastructure is close, but in other cases, extensive sewerage would be required since there is currently no real sewer infrastructure in the heart of Johnny Creek. As such, a homeowner may have to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars just to connect to the sewer system - a cost inconceivable to most Pocatello homeowners.

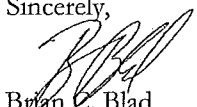
Additionally, studies of the area have been completed to see whether rising nitrate levels in the Portneuf Aquifer are directly related to the large number of septic systems in the area. Local groundwater experts believe residential septic systems are the culprit of groundwater degradation. Regardless of the cause, it is imperative to connect these homes to the municipal wastewater system to ensure a modern, responsible septic regime for the neighborhood.

Having said this, I would urge your support for our request of \$3,300,000 from the FY24 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's State and Tribal Assistance Grants program. The Johnny Creek sewer phase 1 project is the necessary initial step to extending sewer service to this area of the city of Pocatello. The project includes installation of approximately 1-mile of gravity sewer main on Johnny Creek Road. This sewer line would provide the backbone necessary to connect the adjacent streets and neighborhoods for sewer service in subsequent project phases.

The City of Pocatello will meet all required federal cost-share requirements. Additionally, this project is considered by the State of Idaho's Department of Environmental Quality a Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) project and is included in the Clean Water Intended Use Plan (IUP) for FY24. In other words, this project is ready to go.

As always, thank you for your insistent representation of our Pocatello community. And, thank you for the tireless work of your staff here in Idaho and back in Washington, DC. Your work is important and impactful.

Sincerely,


Brian C. Blad
Mayor

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City of Pocatello
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Pocatello, ID 83205-4169
www.pocatello.us/wpc

Water Pollution Control Department
Office: (208) 234-6254
Fax: (208) 237-3927

Levi Adams
Superintendent

March 10, 2023

Congressman Mike Simpson
2084 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Johnny Creek Municipal Sewer Project

Dear Congressman Simpson:

On behalf of the City of Pocatello Water Pollution Control Department and the homeowners we serve in our Johnny Creek neighborhood, I write to support Mayor Blad's request for your support for funding for the first phase of transitioning over 200 homes from their failing septic systems to a new, modern sewer system.

Unfortunately, a growing number of homeowners in the Johnny Creek area are experiencing failed septic systems, and we expect more failures on the horizon. Once a septic system fails, the cost to replace it is over \$20,000, assuming sufficient space on the property is even available. We have known for a long time that the only viable option is abandoning old septic systems and connecting these homes to a municipal sewer system. However, in many cases this is all but unaffordable, with estimates averaging \$70,000 per homeowner for this transition from septic to sewer systems.

It is for these reasons I fully support Mayor Blad's request. The Johnny Creek Sewer Phase 1 project is the necessary initial step to extending sewer service to this area of the City of Pocatello. The project includes installation of approximately 1-mile of gravity sewer mainline on Johnny Creek Road. This sewer line would provide the backbone necessary to connect the adjacent streets and neighborhoods for sewer service in subsequent project phases.

I want to thank you for your dedication to the citizens of Pocatello. We are all grateful for your daily representation of our community.

Sincerely,

/s/ Levi Adams

Levi Adams
WPC Superintendent

Cc: Brian Blad, Mayor
Jeff Mansfield, Public Works Director